

DATA SOURCES AND METHODS

In August 2006, the Department of Juvenile Justice's (DJJ) Quality Assurance, Technical Assistance and Research and Planning units were assigned to the Office of Program Accountability. This realignment was done to ensure that program evaluation is independent and not influenced by the staff directly responsible for the day-to-day operations of programs and services. This chapter outlines the data sources and methods used in the Quality Assurance and Outcome Evaluation analyses presented in this report.

Quality Assurance (QA) Methodology

The Department's QA system was funded and implemented as part of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1994. This system is recognized as a national model for quality assurance systems. Representatives from Texas, Ohio, and Georgia have sent staff to Florida to be trained in the DJJ QA model. In addition, representatives from Australia, England, and Germany have either come to Florida or participated in conference calls to learn about the system and discuss ways to implement similar systems in their respective countries.

Programs are evaluated by a team of professionals who have juvenile justice experience. The team approach provides a broad and balanced perspective for program evaluation and allows programs to be evaluated, in part, by a "certified reviewer" who has operational experience in the program type being reviewed. In the DJJ QA system, the QA team not only seeks to determine if a program is meeting the minimum standard, but also to determine the quality of services provided. On-site program reviews generally take between one and three days to complete. While on-site, QA reviewers and certified reviewers evaluate the program's policies, procedures, and practices as part of a comprehensive process, which includes records and file reviews, observations, and interviews with management, staff and youth.

In order to align the QA review cycle with reporting periods throughout the Department, the QA cycle has changed from a calendar to fiscal year cycle. This change is being implemented for the FY 2008-09 reporting period. This Comprehensive Accountability Report (CAR) includes QA scores for programs reviewed between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009. That means that the programs reviewed between July 1, 2008 and December 31, 2008, will have their previously reported 2008 QA cycle score repeated in this year's CAR. Programs reviewed between January 1, 2009 and June 30, 2009, will have their FY 2008-09 QA cycle score reported in this year's CAR.

The Quality Assurance Performance Rating

Juvenile justice programs and services are evaluated based on their performances on a given set of standards. Standards are the general program components on which programs and services are assessed to determine their overall level of quality. Each program model is reviewed using a distinct evaluation instrument which contains only those standards which are generally applicable to the program model. The quality assurance evaluation process incorporates multiple data sources to ensure the validity of the review.

For example, in a juvenile justice residential program, the program components include:

- management accountability;
- case management and delinquency intervention;
- mental health and substance abuse services;
- health services;
- security and safety; and
- evidence-based practices.

Within each program component there is a set of key indicators that are used to rate the overall performance of the program component. Indicators are rated based on how well a program is performing in a certain area using a ten-point scale, according to the guidelines below, with 10 representing the highest level of performance possible.

Reviewers use the following definitions as a guide when scoring a key indicator:

Exceptional Performance - The program consistently meets and a majority of the time exceeds the requirements of the indicator. The items, documentation and/or actions necessary to accomplish the requirements of the indicator are completed with either an innovative approach or an exceptional performance that is efficient, effective, and readily apparent. The rating will be a 10.

Commendable Performance - The program consistently meets all requirements of the indicator, without exception. The rating will be an 8.

Acceptable Performance - The program consistently meets the requirements of the indicator. The items, documentation and/or actions necessary to accomplish the requirements of the indicator are completed as required, though few exceptions may occur. The rating will be a 7.

Minimal Performance - The program does not consistently meet the requirements of the indicator. Frequent and/or significant exceptions occur or the program is ineffective in completing the items, documentation and/or actions necessary to accomplish the requirements of the indicator. The rating will be a 5.

Failing Performance - The items, documentation and/or actions necessary to accomplish the requirements of the indicator are missing or are done so poorly that they do not contribute to accomplishing the requirements of the indicator, or include falsified documentation. The rating will be a 0.

Programs receive one of five possible performance ratings at the standard level: failed to meet standards, minimum performance, acceptable performance, commendable performance or exceptional performance. Standard ratings are derived from indicator scores. A standard receives two scores: a raw score, the sum total of that standard's indicator scores, and a maximum possible score, the number of applicable

indicators in that standard multiplied by 10 (the highest possible indicator score). A percentage score is then calculated by dividing the raw score by the maximum possible score.

For example:

Program A is rated for Standard One which has four indicators. The program receives an acceptable performance rating of '7' for each of the four indicators. The program's *raw score* would be 28 (the sum of the indicator scores: $7+7+7+7$). The program's *maximum possible score* would be 10 times the number of applicable indicators, which in this case is 4; the maximum possible score is 40 (10×4). The program's percentage score for Standard One is derived by dividing the raw score (28) by the maximum possible score (40). The resulting percentage, 70%, is Program A's performance for Standard One, "Acceptable Performance."

Overall Program Scores: To determine a program's overall rating and performance, the same method used for computing the scores for program components is applied with one exception: instead of summing the key indicator scores, the overall score of the program component is totaled. At the overall program performance level, a program receives two scores: a raw score, the sum of all standard raw scores, and a maximum possible score, the sum of all standard maximum possible scores. The program's percentage score results from dividing the overall program score by the overall maximum possible score. The following grid is an example of a completed performance rating profile for a fictional residential program.

Residential Juvenile Correctional Facility

Quality Assurance Performance Rating Profile

Program Type:	High/Max Risk	Program Code:	4235
Contract Provider:	Provider, Inc.	Contract Number:	R2D2
County/Circuit #:	Citrus/5th Circuit	Number of Beds:	96
Review Date:	August 4-6, 2009	Lead Reviewer Code:	78

Program Performance by Indicator			
Management Accountability			
1.01	P Background Screening	10	
1.02	Risk Management and Incident Reporting	10	
1.03	P Provision of Abuse Free Environment	7	
1.04	Escapes	10	
1.05	Pre-Service Training Requirements	10	
1.06	In-Service Training Requirements	10	
1.07	Special Diets	10	
1.08	National School Lunch and Breakfast	NA	
		Total	67
Case Management & Delinquency Intervention Services			
2.01	Classification	10	
2.02	Assessment	10	
2.03	Multidisciplinary Intervention	10	
2.04	Performance Planning	10	
2.05	Performance Reporting	8	
2.06	Parent or Guardian Involvement	10	
2.07	Transition Planning	8	
2.08	Grievance Process	10	
2.09	Behavior Management	8	
2.10	Room Restriction	NA	
2.11	Controlled Observation	8	
2.12	Behavior Management Unit	NA	
		Total	92
Mental Health and Substance Abuse			
3.01	Coordination of Services	10	
3.02	P Suicide Risk Screening	10	
3.03	Mental Health Evaluation/Assessment	8	
3.04	Substance Abuse Assessment	8	
3.05	Planning and Delivery of Services	8	
3.06	Suicide Precautions	10	
3.07	Crisis Intervention and Implementation	8	
3.08	Emergency Services	8	
3.09	Requirements for Specialized Models	7	
		Total	77
HEALTHCARE SERVICES			
4.01	Designated Health Authority		8
4.02	Healthcare Admission Screening		10
4.03	Comprehensive Physical Assessment		8
4.04	Screening, Evaluation, Treatment for STDs		8
4.05	Sick Call		8
4.06	Medication Administration		8
4.07	Pharmaceuticals: Storage, Security, Access		8
4.08	Infection Control		8
4.09	Chronic Illness Treatment Process		8
4.10	Episodic/Emergency Care		8
4.11	Authority for Evaluation and Treatment		8
4.12	Pregnant Girls and their Neonates		NA
		Total	90
Security and Safety Services			
5.01	P Supervision of Youth		7
5.02	Room Checks		7
5.03	Key Control		7
5.04	Internal Alert System		10
5.05	Log Books		10
5.06	Gang Prevention and Intervention		10
5.07	Contraband and Searches		10
5.08	Transportation		10
5.09	Tool and Sensitive Item Control		8
5.10	Disaster and Continuity of Operations		10
5.11	Flammable, Toxic, and Poisonous Control		7
5.12	Water Safety		NA
		Total	96

Residential Juvenile Correctional Facility

Program Performance by Standard								
Standard	Program Score	Max Score	Rating	Failed	Minimal	Acceptable	Commendable	Exceptional
				0-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-100%
1. Management Accountability	67	70	96%					X
2. CM & Delinquency Intervention	92	100	92%					X
3. Mental Hlth/Substance Abuse	77	90	86%				X	
4. Healthcare Services	90	110	82%				X	
5. Security and Safety	96	110	87%				X	
Overall Score	422	480	88%				X	
Overall Program Performance								
Commendable Performance 88%								
Scoring legend: Performance Indicators: 0 = Failing, 5 = Minimal, 7 = Acceptable, 8 = Commendable, 10 = Exceptional								

The QA process includes the following elements:

Identification of External Control Factors: The design of the quality assurance system is intended to hold programs accountable for those elements over which they have control as well as point out problems which affect good practice. Factors that may seriously impair a program's ability to perform, but which are beyond its control, are identified as external control factors. These factors, and the degree to which they influence each program component, are identified in the individual QA

report. For example, a program may not have a camera system installed in all areas of the program. The lack of a camera system may be a budget issue that cannot be resolved at the program level. The requirement will be rated out of compliance but an external control factor will be noted in the report. External control factors are not intended to be used as excuses for program performance.

Identification of Critical Issues: Certified review teams are trained to be aware of situations in programs which may or may not be a part of the quality assurance review. Reviewers are instructed to contact the lead reviewer immediately when illegal, fraudulent, and unethical or other serious situations are suspected. The lead reviewer will contact the QA Bureau Chief, who will advise the Director of Program Accountability, the Office of the Inspector General and appropriate Assistant Secretary of the circumstances so that an investigation/audit may be initiated or immediate corrective action can commence.

Provider Ability to Challenge the QA Report: The Department has implemented an internal challenge process to offer providers a mechanism to review draft reports and offer additional information that may impact their score or provide edits when errors are identified. Each draft report is emailed to the program director and the regional office of the appropriate Department program area. The program director has five working days to contact the QA office and challenge the findings or advise the Department of errors in the report. For any issue discovered, the regional QA manager discusses the findings with the lead reviewer and reviews the documentation. When necessary, other team members are contacted for their input.

Conditional Status: This status is an alert system for management to ensure programs are placed on corrective action to address issues of concern. A program is placed on Conditional Status when they achieve at least a minimal level of performance overall but fail to meet minimal performance level in one or more program components. In addition to corrective action, Conditional Status triggers more intensive monitoring by the contract manager or regional office of the affected program area. Programs that are not able to bring the standard(s) up to acceptable levels of quality within six months are subject to contract or administrative action.

Outcome Evaluation Methodology

Data Sources

The annual DJJ CAR provides program outputs and outcomes for the continuum of juvenile justice services provided by the Department including: prevention, intake, detention, probation and community intervention, and residential commitment. There are methodological differences in the analyses of the various juvenile justice services due to variations in data sources and outcome measures. These differences are outlined below.

The primary source of data for the CAR outcome evaluation analyses is DJJ's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS). JJIS contains demographic and delinquency referral information, admission and release dates, and release reasons for most youth receiving DJJ services. There are a few exceptions. Demographic and release data for youth released by the Florida Network prevention programs and redirection programs are

provided to DJJ by the providers. To match this data to additional offense-related data in the JJIS system, a matching protocol was developed based on youth names, social security numbers, and dates of birth.

Additional recidivism outcome data are compiled from the adult system using information from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and Florida Department of Corrections (DOC). Arrest and disposition information for youth who reached the age of 18 years or who had cases transferred to adult court was obtained from FDLE's Florida Crime Information Center. Information pertaining to dispositions on cases processed in adult court was obtained from DOC and is limited to youth convicted of felonies and sentenced to adult probation or prison.

Methods

Since 1996, the Department holds an annual Common Definitions Meeting to determine the methodology for defining variables and calculating outcome measures. This methodology was carefully considered and originally developed by key juvenile justice policymakers and providers including DJJ, the Justice Research Center, the Legislature, the Governor's Office, the Office of Program Planning and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), the Office of Economic and Demographic Research, contracted providers and other juvenile justice stakeholders. Although a common definitions meeting was not held during 2009, DJJ continuously solicits providers and stakeholders for their input.

Time Periods Covered

Fiscal years were selected as the reporting period, as they correspond with the Department's budgetary calendar. The particular fiscal year (FY) covered in each section of this report is based upon the primary focus of the data presented. For the Intake and Detention sections, the primary focus is on youth processed through intake and those placed in detention facilities. In those sections, data for FY 2008-09 are presented. For the Prevention, Probation, and Residential Commitment sections, the focus is on youth success (defined as not adjudicated/convicted for an offense during the follow-up period) after completion. In order to allow a suitable follow-up period to track subsequent offending, data for youth completing services in FY 2007-08 are presented in this year's CAR.

Demographic Variables

The report provides information for youth by gender, race, ethnicity, and age. Categorizations of race and ethnicity are derived from DJJ staff interviews with youth. Race is measured as black, white or other. Ethnicity is categorized as Hispanic or non-Hispanic. Age is defined as the youth's age at the time of admission in each of the sections except Intake. In the Intake section, age is based on the date the youth's most serious offense occurred during the fiscal year. In analysis that compares white, black, other and Hispanic, youth with a Hispanic ethnicity are reported as "Hispanic" regardless of race. Those youths are counted as Hispanic and not duplicated as white, black or other.

Release and Completion Status

Identifying why youth leave a program and the percentage that *complete* a program rather than leave for other reasons, are outcome measures reported in the CAR. There are a variety of reasons why youth are released from a program other than the completion of services. Identifying the reason for a release is dependent on DJJ staff's categorization from a list of release reasons in JJIS. To ensure the reliability of these

release reasons, their accuracy is assessed in relation to subsequent placements. The definition of program completion differs slightly across program areas as described below.

- **Prevention and Victim Services:** The release reasons in JJIS for prevention programs includes: 1) completing all services, 2) expelled from the program, 3) dropped out, 4) changed schools, 5) referred to another program/agency, 6) moved, or 7) other release. Youth are categorized in this chapter as either a "completion" (item 1 above) or an "other release" (items 2-7 above). The Florida Network uses "completion" or "non-completion" in the dataset they provide to the Department.
- **Probation and Community Intervention:** Completions are defined as youth who complete the individualized treatment plan or court ordered sanctions and are released from the supervision or custody of the Department; or youth serving the maximum allowable time or who reach the maximum allowable age over which the juvenile court retains jurisdiction. Multisystemic Therapy providers categorized youth as either a "completion" or "other release" in the datasets provided to DJJ.
- **Residential and Correctional Facilities:** Completions are defined as youth who complete the program and are assigned to a conditional release or post-commitment probation program; youth who complete the program and were directly discharged; or youth serving the maximum allowable time or who reach the maximum allowable age over which the juvenile court retains jurisdiction.

Offenses During Services, Supervision or Placement

During the time period a youth is under DJJ supervision or custody it is possible for the youth to commit a crime. The number of youth who committed an offense during services (ODS), supervision (ODS) or placement (ODP) is a measure used to gauge the effectiveness of the programs in monitoring and guiding the behavior of the youth in their care. The ODS/ODP rate is calculated as the percentage of youth who offended during the time they were receiving services, or were under supervision or placement. Only offenses that resulted in adjudication are counted. ODS/ODP is used as an outcome measure for all youth released from a program regardless of their completion status.

Prior Delinquency Measures

Information on the offense histories for youth who completed prevention, probation, and residential commitment programs are presented in the respective sections. Differences in prior offending by gender, race, and ethnicity are discussed. Measures of prior offending include:

- **Percent of Youth with Prior Charges** - Used in the Prevention and section as many prevention youth have little to no prior delinquency history. As such, the percentage of youth with prior delinquency charges is presented, rather than the average number of prior charges per youth completing the program.
- **Percent of Youth with Prior Adjudicated Charges** - Used in the Prevention section as some prevention youth have little to no prior delinquency history. As such, the percentage of youth with prior delinquency charges is presented, rather than the average number of prior adjudicated charges per youth completing the program.
- **Average Number of Prior Charges Per Youth** - Used in the Probation and Community Intervention and

Residential Services sections as most youth receiving these services have previously been referred to DJJ and adjudicated delinquent. The average number of prior charges provides a measure of the extent of the youth's involvement in delinquency. The measure is calculated by summing the total number of charges received by all youth prior to program admission and dividing by the total number of youth completing the program during the fiscal year.

- Average Number of Prior Adjudicated Charges - Used in the Probation and Community Intervention and Residential Services sections as most youth receiving these services have previously been referred to DJJ and adjudicated delinquent. This is calculated only for those charges that ultimately result in adjudication or adjudication withheld. The measure is calculated by summing the total number of adjudications received by all youth prior to program admission and dividing by the total number of youth completing the program during the fiscal year.
- Average Prior Seriousness Index - Designed to provide an indication of the extent and seriousness of youths' delinquency histories. A seriousness score is calculated for each youth by assigning point values to prior charges based upon the seriousness of the adjudicated charged offenses. One of the following values is assigned for each charge:
 - Violent felony – 8 points;
 - Property or other felony – 5 points;
 - Misdemeanor – 2 points; and
 - Any other charged offense – 1 point.

The Average Prior Seriousness Index is calculated by dividing the total seriousness scores by the total number of youth completing the program during the fiscal year.

Recidivism Outcome Methodology

Delinquency prevention, probation and residential commitment programs are designed to provide treatment and curb youths' further involvement with the juvenile justice system. These programs are expected to effectively mitigate the influence of risk factors and increase the resilience of the youth they serve. An important indicator of outcomes is the percentage of youth who recidivate.

Recidivism rates are calculated only for youth who completed a program in an effort to determine the effectiveness of the program based on youth who actually received the services offered.

Follow-up Period

At the annual Common Definitions Meeting, the duration of one-year was selected as the official follow-up period for recidivism. Therefore, youth included in the CAR recidivism analyses are those who completed a program between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008. Recidivism is then tracked for the period beginning on July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2009 (i.e., one-year follow-up period).

Recidivism Measures

There are numerous methods of measuring re-offending, each of which provides important yet different information. Five commonly used measures are presented in this report:

- Subsequent referral/arrest and felony referral/arrest - Indicates a youth has been charged with another offense. An arrest does not necessarily mean that the released youth committed the offense charged, but it does provide an indication of the workload generated for the juvenile and adult systems.
- Subsequent juvenile adjudication or adult conviction (including adjudications withheld) - Provides a more substantive measure of subsequent criminal involvement. The offense must have occurred within one year of release. This is the Department's official definition of recidivism used throughout the CAR and Program Accountability Measures (PAM) analyses.
- Subsequent felony adjudication or conviction - Examines whether youth are subsequently adjudicated or convicted for a felony offense that occurred within one year of release from a program.
- Subsequent sanctions - There are three potential subsequent sanctions measured and reported in the CAR analyses: subsequent commitment to DJJ, sentencing to adult probation, and sentencing to adult prison. These measures provide additional information regarding the impact of re-offending.

Length of Services

The length of time that a youth spends in a program is an indicator of the extent of services provided. An average length of service, supervision or stay is calculated for each program based on the average number of days a youth was in the program. Days spent in temporary release status are not included. Data on ALOS are presented in the Detention, Prevention, Probation, and Residential Services sections for four groups of youth:

- All youth released including those youth who did not complete the program;
- Youth who completed the program;
- Successful Completers; and
- Non-successful Completers.

Intake Measures

The Intake chapter presents data on youth referred to DJJ in FY 2008-09. Data are categorized by offense seriousness (felony, misdemeanor or other), as well as by offense type (person, property, etc.). Data in this chapter are presented based on the most serious offense for which a youth was referred during the fiscal year. Therefore, the data can only be used to categorize offenders and are not appropriate for determining the number of offenses that were committed over a fiscal year. A profile of youth referred based on gender, race, ethnicity, and age is also presented.

Detention Measures

The Detention chapter presents data on secure and home detention services for FY 2008-09. Measures of secure detention utilization including operating capacity, total service days, average daily population, average utilization rate, minimum and maximum daily population, and transfers into detention, are provided. The definition for each of these measures is as follows:

- **Admissions** - each entry into a secure detention center. These figures may include multiple admissions for a single youth;

- **Operating capacity** - the facility's number of beds;
- **Total service days** - the sum of all youths' days in a given detention center during the fiscal year. This value is computed for each secure detention facility;
- **Average daily population** - calculated by dividing total service days by the 365 days in the year;
- **Average utilization rate** - the detention center's total service days divided by the total possible service days. Total possible service days are calculated by multiplying the center's operating capacity by 365 days in a year;
- **Minimum and maximum daily population** - total service days for each day of the year relative to the operating capacity; determines the lowest and highest population for a given secure detention center;
- **Transfers in** - youth transferred from one detention center into another.